

ALBERTA Street News

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COMBINING INDIGENOUS CULTURE WITH
CHRISTIAN FAITH AT SACRED HEART CHURCH
OF THE FIRST PEOPLES - PAGES 4 - 5

**ALBERTA STREET
NEWS**

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**Cover photo: The Medi-
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**A Poem for the Morning Written
in the Evening**

By D.H. Kerby

"You who will emerge from the flood in which we have gone under, when the time comes at last and people are helpers to people, think of us with forbearance." Bertolt Brecht

As Hegel wrote in 1807, "It is not difficult to see that ours is a birth-time
And a transition to a new era." As Schoenberg burst out of the constraint
of keys.
So the forces of production, no longer fettered by the relations of produc-
tion, burst forth
Armed to the teeth, in a great uprooting women, it is dark
And I do not like what's necessary dark as this poem but not
Darkness at Noon. Now it is night.

This is, in part, old language, but just as post-structuralism preserved the
elements of
Structuralism, so the morning contains the night, not defined over and
against
The night in some sort of determinate negation or even less like a Jungian
shadow,
But rather — Transcendence, in German, Übersteigung, literally "climb-
ing over".

Yes, there will be another evening, the dialectic continues after the great
upheaval,
Or is that just a weak excuse for the massacre of the miners and other such
post-
Struggle excesses?

1:42 in the morning now, and I am wondering just how much of my poem
I believe in. there is a God, ad a little bit of God in each of us, and the
Still, still quiet voice of George Fox guides my typing fingertips now, as
Whether he knew it or not, it guided Daniel Elisberg's hands at the photo-
copying machine.

Sitting in the sixth arrondissement with a veteran of the French Communist
Party
Who was unable to join the screenwriter husband in California because
Of the McCarran-Walter Act, "I suppose I have wandered into the camp
which says
"There is no contradiction." The sun will rise tomorrow.

.....
: Thanks to MLA Dr. Swann for his support in purchasing an ad in Alberta :
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: Linda Dumont, Editor :
:.....

THE VIEWS PRESENTED ARE THOSE OF THE CONTRIBUTORS.

Happiness is knowing what I can do without

By Joanne Benger

April 22 is Earth Day and once again we must search our consciences to see if we have been green. In 1974 the club of Rome said we must level off population growth, industrial output and pollution to achieve "stabilized global equilibrium". Otherwise the human life system would vanish by the end of this century. The population explosion was the greatest concern. United Nations declared 1974 to be world Population Year and everyone spoke of Zero Population Growth. Nobody listened. We now number seven billion. Our population has nearly doubled.

Our main concern now is how we seven billion can all have the necessities of life – food clothing and shelter. Great minds share their suggestions and are not always popular.

When it comes to food, meat is now under attack. Some nations already have sugar taxes and it is predicted meat taxes will be next. At present 80% of all agricultural land in the world is being used for grazing or growing food for animals, according to United Nations. Bill Gates has blogged, "Is there enough meat for everyone?" and "How can we make enough meat without destroying the planet?" Richard Branson has given up meat to help save the rainforests. Many think the solution is man-made meats, either plant based burgers that look and taste like meat or meat grown from animal cells in laboratories.

When it comes to clothing the problem is too many cheap clothes. The average person now buys 70 items of clothing a year while dumping 37 kilograms of used clothing. Most of the clothes we drop into donation bins either end up in the land fill as textile

waste or are exported and sold for profit in Africa. Many African countries want to ban our used clothing because local textile markets can't compete. Here we are in control. We can solve the problem by buying fewer clothes and keeping them longer.

I took the 70 item challenge. I counted every wardrobe addition I made in 2017 including purses, shoes, belts and socks whether I got them new, used or as gifts and came up with 58 items. Linda Dumont, who was awarded the 2016 Salvos Prelorentozos Peace Award, only got 43 clothing items in 2017. I have now resolved to do my bit to help save the world by limiting my wardrobe input in 2018 to 36 items. Can I do it? I hope so. Ask me next year.

When it comes to shelter we have a problem. We have always associated big houses with success. The ultimate Yuppie status symbol is a McMansion on a spacious lawn. Now we have the tiny house movement. By definition a tiny house is under 500 square feet. Even smaller are the micro apartments that are springing up in all cities. They may be as small as 140 square feet. Already Edmonton has the Crawford Block with small affordable micro suites and there is a rumour that the old YMCA building on 102A avenue may be converted into 80 micro suites with fold down tables and beds.

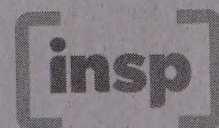
Different people embrace them for different reasons. Tiny homes are seen as hipster wish fulfillment for people who want to live on the down



low. Practical older people see it as a chance to down size and declutter. Ascetics want to live a simplistic life of minimalism. But perhaps the greatest motivation isn't a new idea, either. Confucius said, "I live in a very small house but my windows look out on a very large world."

Don't buy wild

Pledge not to buy items made with or from wild animal parts, especially seals, shark fins, ivory and rhino horns. Do not purchase live wild animals and avoid facilities that keep animals captive under inhumane conditions. Humane Society International



International
Network of
Street Papers

Culture and faith unite at Sacred Heart

By Linda Dumont

Photos by Linda Dumont

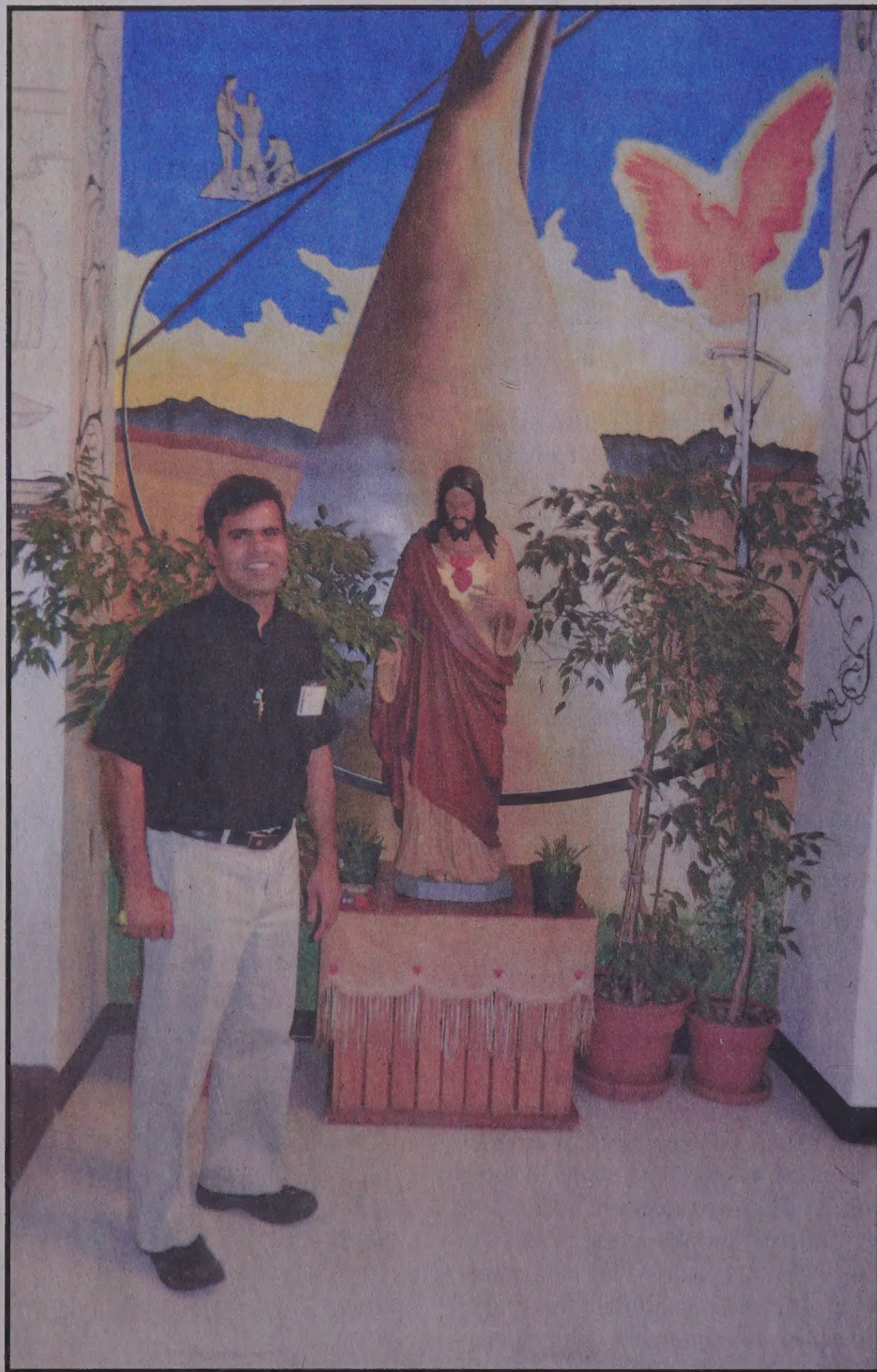
I visited Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples to take photographs for the paper, and to meet the new priest, Father Susai Jesu. I have been to the church many times for funerals, and for other inner

city gatherings and protest marches, and always I am impressed by the beauty of the art displayed throughout the sanctuary, and the unique blending of Indigenous culture with the Christian faith. This is in keeping with the epistles of the Bible in which the apostle Paul stated that

the Gentiles need not adopt Jewish practices to be Christians. It is a walk of faith.

In 1991 Archbishop Joseph McNeil designated Sacred Heart Church as National Indigenous parish, the first of its kind in Canada. Anyone with Indigenous ancestry is considered a parishioner, but others are most welcome, too, as all are part of the circle of life as illustrated by the Medicine Wheel that has a prominent place above the altar.

Sacred Heart Church provides pastoral care to the homeless, marginalized and the poor and the urban Indigenous people.



Father Susai Jesu

By Peter Hans
Schultz

Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples has a new priest. While some mourn the replacement of Father Jim Holland with a new priest named Susai (meaning Moses) Jesu, others are thankful to have a young priest with knowledge of Cree, who is also knowledgeable with

native concepts like the medicine

wheel, smudging, native drumming, wakes and much more. Father Susai learned Cree from elders and spent eight years in Northern Saskatchewan at Pelican Narrows and Sandy Bay. He was born in South India and is 46 years old. He is fluent in Hindi and other languages as well as Cree. He spent five years as a priest in North India and came to Canada in 2007 when he was invited by Oblates from here. He has a Masters degree in Counselling from St. Paul's University in Ottawa and a Master of Psychology from India. Many appreciate him as they observe him and feel the compassion he radiates. He is a valuable member of Church Street.

Below right: The table is covered by a blanket in the Métis colors, and an inuksuk stands on one corner

to represent the Inuit. A small table to the right is where the medicine man sits during the mass to do smudging with those who want to purify themselves before God.

Near left: A station of the cross. The 14 stations of the cross painted on the walls are to be viewed clockwise rather than counter clockwise as in other Catholic churches, because the Medicine Wheel (front cover) is read clockwise.

The elements of the communion

are kept in a small wigwam on a table in a side room.

Lower left: Drums are a part of the

services. Lower right corner: Four times a year the big drum, is used for seasonal change.



Channelling the Budai

By Allan Sheppard

I've visited many Chinese restaurants over many years and encountered many Laughing Buddhas. I've even rubbed a few Buddha bellies for good luck and encouraged children and grandchildren to do the same.

Laughing Buddhas, or Budais, may be huge or small, seated or standing, but they are always fat, with bald heads and huge bellies. And they are always laughing joyously.

Some statues show the Budai (a Chinese successor to ancient India's enlightened Gautama Buddha) surrounded by children. They are seated on his ample body wherever there is room: on his shoulders, on his lap, in his arms, at his feet. They too are laughing and fat: happy and content.

The Laughing Buddha has been on my mind recently, thanks to my three youngest grandchildren, who moved to Edmonton at the beginning of March. Interacting with them is pure joy. The oldest is nine-and-a-half, the youngest almost three, and the middle one four-and-a-half. Whenever I enter their apartment, all three of them drop whatever they are doing and run to greet me: Grandpa! Grandpa! Once routine formalities—what's in my backpack; who gets to play with my smartphone for how long—are done, I find a place on a sofa or easy chair.

Within minutes, sometimes nanoseconds, one or both youngest will climb beside me and nestle within an arm. The oldest would probably join them, if he could. But he weighs more than twice the other two together, and there isn't

room for him; he sits on the floor at or near my feet.

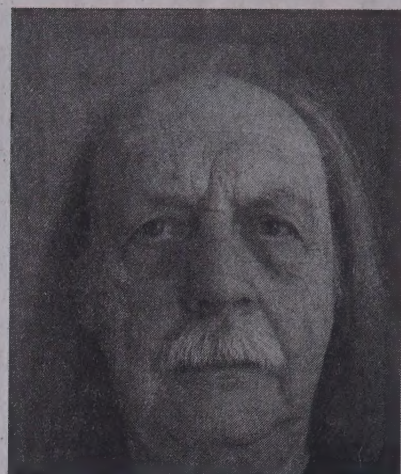
What usually happens next disconcerted me at first and still makes me think.

While I happily and contentedly play private Laughing Buddha to my grandchildren, they play video games and watch YouTube videos on smartphones and an Xbox.

The youngest watches YouTube videos, mostly of a kind I remember older grandchildren watching in their day on television: Dora the Explorer, Doc McStuffins; and something new called Ryan's Game Review. The latter is unabashed consumerist propaganda; she seems oblivious to that aspect (so far) and her other favourites seem to have modest educational/entertainment value.

The boys spend most of their time playing or watching videos about Minecraft. Wikipedia describes it as a sandbox game, but Minecraft seems to me more a phenomenon than a simple game. I have no idea what is going on as I watch the boys play most of the time, but it's clear each knows exactly what they are doing individually or together, as they choose. Sometimes they co-operate; sometimes they compete and argue. But it seems obvious they are using their imaginations creatively to conceive, build, and experience projects.

Conceptually, Minecraft seems not much different from the Mecano sets of my childhood or the Lego blocks of my children's childhoods. The technology is different by orders of magnitude, but the concept is the same: dream and build; build and dream; repeat, ex-



ploring or expanding on what you discover and learn.

The boys generally build predictable things: houses, fortresses, furniture, expected environmental enhancements (lakes, gardens, trees and so on) but the possibilities are great. They can build things. They can build worlds. They can create narratives, perhaps even art, in, about, and around their worlds and the things in them. The possibilities seem infinite, especially given that players can expand, enhance, and interact with small or large aspects of their and each other's worlds.

The one thing that seems not to be necessary in such conceptual worlds—or at least not indispensable for their functioning—is written language. Voicings and iconographic images (emojis and the like, an ever-expanding visual vocabulary) enable communication and story-telling with little or no textual content. (Perhaps the novel really is dead, as some presumed—or presumptuous—experts now seriously proclaim.)

The technology and its consequences pro and con have their missionaries and advocates, but there are many among my generation and its immediate successors who deplore what they see happening. We grew up in a world where learning, work, and

communication depended exclusively or substantially on written words; not so our grandchildren.

My granddaughter can find anything she wants on an iPhone. She can't read or write, but she can interpret icons and images, and she can use a touchscreen. Her wants do not range widely now, but as her interests and will learn how to explore them. The next step is to add voice commands, as her older brothers do.

How long, I wonder, will it be before the online world becomes for her not an open book, in the language of my generation, but its high-tech equivalent: an open window, a threshold she might cross only to be lost to us forever.

Who knows where our grandchildren may go in the brave new worlds they find or create down virtual rabbit holes or through electronic looking-glasses? I don't.

What they may find; what might happen to them; what they might do to us and our world worries me.

But I also know my generation and

those before us have crossed analogous thresholds throughout history. Not always with the best results. It takes only a cursory reading of history to appreciate the damage written words have done wherever they have emerged and thrived: as sacred books and texts, as political and social manifestos, as economic treatises, as national and institutional constitutions, as propagandized history, as fake news.

Such things exist online too, in seemingly more virulent forms that sometimes egregiously distort the good and great things written words can do and have done.

But consider for a moment the online impact of children and youth in the wake of the Valentine's Day school massacre in Parkland, Florida. Consider further the positive and powerful presence and voice projected by children as young as eleven at the March For Our Lives in Washington, D.C., on March 24. [wapo.st/2pHBgAr<<http://wapo.st/2pHBgAr>>] Such eloquence and passion cannot—must not—be denied.

If they succeed, it will be because they have learned well how to use the pulpit and the megaphone online technology gives them, and which they understand far better than I. And because we do not get in their way.

If they fail, it may be because too much of the world pushes back

against the technology that informs and empowers them. We, their elders, may co-opt enough of their peers to our ways to outflank them.

Italian novelist Elena Ferante neatly captures nuances of our dilemma in a recent essay: "I greatly fear the generations who don't proudly leave their parents behind. But I'm also frightened by those who, at 20, leave their parents behind to embrace the mores of grandparents and great-grandparents. I don't understand the young people who would replace the world of today with a golden age when everyone knew their place, that is, in an order based on sexist and racist hierarchies. Sometimes, especially when they declare themselves fascists, they don't even seem like young people, and I tend to treat them even more harshly than the old people who inspired them. Dreaming of a return to the past is a denial of youth, and it grieves me to discover that young women, too, dream those dreams." [bit.ly/2I41d3K<<http://bit.ly/2I41d3K>>]

I worry when children seem obsessed with—"addicted to," as I often read and hear—their screens and devices. How could I not? It's a worrisome world, wherever we are in it, and the less I know, the more I can find to worry about—if I choose to become obsessive in my own ways.

My grandchildren, in fact all children, must walk their own paths. I can't follow them very far, and I'm not sure I want to. Or should.

I can only trust them: keeping watchful trust, certainly, but at a respectful distance.

My reward is to have them trust me and turn to me for tactile pleasures their screens cannot give: a snuggle, a cuddle, a nestle; an arm around a shoulder, a hug goodbye.

When the snow is finally gone, we'll go for walks.

We might even talk.



Discovering the truth of who we are

By Maria B.

Self-empowerment is free to anyone who chooses to use it. It comes from within and nowhere else. You cannot borrow it, steal it or sell it. It is always available to you and never wears out. The only choice you have to make is whether or not you will take the necessary steps to be able to implement it in your life.

True Self and False Self are concepts that we should be taking into consideration in our lives. A "True Self" describes the person that we are meant to be, it describes a sense of self based authentic experience, and a feeling of being alive, having a "real self".

False Self is created by a defensive self - one which in extreme cases could leave its holders lacking spontaneity and feeling dead and empty, behind a mere appearance of being real.

You are one thing only. You are a Divine Being. YOU HAVE BEEN CREATED BY OUR ALL POWERFUL CREATOR. You are the sacred creative force of who you are meant to be. Deep within, there is something profoundly known, not consciously, but subconsciously, a quiet truth, that is not a version of something, but an original knowing. This absolute, true identity based on the facts of who we are, is the guidance in our path to greater becoming; a true awareness. It is so self-sustaining that our recognition of it is not required. We are offspring of such a powerfully divine force - Creator of all things known and unknown."

When we bear a false identification, we become a copy of everything we would like but this causes frustration, jealousy and plain envy for what others seem to have. We will be experiencing extreme selfishness, a lack of empathy, and a craving for

admiration and we make everything about us. Everything will be focused on what we

would like to be and we will always thrive to be someone else. Our own needs and frustrations will become our strongest denominators; we become skillful at controlling and blaming others. As you can see, superiority and entitlement do not promote mutually-satisfying, long-term close relationships.

To obtain the praise and admiration they seek, they will exaggerate their talents and accomplishments. Their desire to be viewed as superior can lead to misrepresenting their history and accomplishments. They use lies and any means in order to get promotions, manipulate and/or seduce people. They fantasize about and seek power, fame, status, or money, and are often envious of others who have an abundance of these resources. With grandiosity and arrogance, they demand that others treat them as special or superior. Their false view of themselves is incredibly powerful and demanding.

Feeling entitled with lacking in empathy, these people tend to exploit others to serve their own needs. They never change or see any reason why they should change but if you stand in their path they will hurt you and would not think twice in exploiting you. Just as their image in the mirror is deceiving, they become masters of deceit in order to fulfill their needs. You can not expect them to fulfill



any of your needs or desires unless it suits their goal for stardom. They are incredibly demanding.

Generally you should not count on anyone fulfilling your deepest needs and taking care of you. However, it is definitely desirable to be with someone who is considerate, loving and thoughtful - traits which false people can fake but cannot truly embody. Basically this is a survival coping mechanism for low self-esteem.

Very young children naturally feel they are the center of the world. They need to experience a healthy image about themselves in order to feel good about themselves to gain the confidence to grow up and take care of themselves and to be able to initiate social interactions. Children learn from their parents through receiving patience, empathy and approval. Through this they develop the ideals of their caregivers. When approval is erratic or lacking all together, the child will feel ignored and abandoned. When criticism for anything is excessive along with verbal abuse, the child believes everything the parents tell them about their behavior and this changes who they are meant to be. When parents are excessively permissive, it is just as damaging as the children grow up without boundaries/limits.

Celebrate Earth Day – April 22nd

By Joanne Benger

1. Rediscover the joy of doing without. Endorse simplicity and minimalism.
2. Avoid antibiotics. Eat garlic to prevent and cure colds. If you eat enough garlic germ people will keep their distance.
3. Say no to deodorant. It is just chemical in plastic. Proudly smell as nature intended.
4. Shun the synthetics and wear chemical free cotton. Consider wrinkles and fading your new status symbols.
5. Just say no to plastic water bottles. Carry a refillable bottle with tap water or filtered water.
6. Ban those single size plastic coffee pods that end up in the landfill. I've heard you'll be trapped in hell until they decompose.
7. Shake your head back and forth when offered plastic cutlery. Like the knights of old, carry your own metal.
8. Don't buy it if the packaging can't be recycled.
9. Never buy a shoddy make-do item to save money. Buy quality that will last.
10. Recycle everything that the recycling centre will accept.
11. Don't buy anything that can only be used once aside from food, that is. Buy locally grown food.
12. Buy second hand when you can. Second best is buying things really cheap on sale to discourage making and selling them in the future.
13. Cut down on paper products. Refuse to use toilet paper that can't be recycled.
14. Don't take the earth for granted. Walk quietly and leave only footprints. Pick up other people's litter.
15. Only eat cruelty free range chickens and eggs or not, if you are vegan.
16. Embrace nature even if it is now acid rain, polluted streams and odour of feed lots and sewage lagoons.
17. Live off the grid if rural. Cancel all your utility bills and live naturally as the cave men did.
18. If urban, you must legally have electricity and water but use the minimum.
19. Treasure the old. They don't waste resources making antiques.
20. Regift, reuse gift bags and use natural holiday decoration that will decompose into compost.
21. Airplanes cause a lot of green house gas, so don't fly for the fun of it; walk, swim or row a boat.
22. Celebrate the 22nd of April in a way that says, "I love you, Earth." You won't make anyone jealous.

Children are deprived of idealization in one of the following ways:

1. The parents are unpredictable, unreliable, or lacking in empathy.
2. The parents are emotionally or physically abusive.
3. The parents have no interest in the child's needs, but exploit the child to feed their own self-esteem.

Without receiving empathy or the ability to look up to others, children do not develop empathy for themselves or others. They may not have a healthy development and they become stuck in the narcissistic phase. As a result, they feel flawed and unacceptable. They fear rejection and isolation because of their perceived

worthlessness. To avoid this pain, they focus on controlling how others view them by embellishing their own accomplishments and skills. They feel deep shame, which causes them to develop an artificial self. While we all develop an artificial self to some degree, narcissists identify with their artificial self. Preoccupied with presenting the right image, they are ironically rarely aware of their own low self-esteem.

People with adequate self-esteem are usually willing to look at themselves with honest self-reflection and consider areas in which they could improve. This makes sense because they have empathy for the flaws and

inadequacies in both themselves and others. Sadly, the narcissist believes that flaws are to be hated and concealed, and that only perfection and superiority can be displayed. Thus, they view themselves and others with a perspective that swings from overvaluation to loathing. In their quest for approval and acceptance, they use their charm and charisma. Once dependent on others' approval, the smallest hint of disapproval can send them into a state of punishing rage.

We must rise above and live in our True Identity of who we are.

Opinion:

Why We Really Don't Help

By Rodney Graham

Everywhere, across Canada, the homeless lack resources - help. So why, after so much talk, and why, after we are becoming so aware and we actually do have the ability, if not the will - to help them, we do not? It's not just the people in power that do not have the will, it's the general public too. We have all the information, all the resources, all the advice. But mostly, it's the business community - their influence. But who influences the business community? The general public do. The business community do what the public wants, and the government does what the business community wants.

The bullshit games. Yes, there's more than enough to help them - the 'experts', the poverty pimps, the police, the social agencies. Games, games for gain, greed, and prestige - at the cost of the countries most vulnerable and helpless. Large groups of leeches have made a good living off the backs of the

poor. Every year there are conferences, social agency conferences, governments have conferences, writers have conferences, experts have conferences. Many academics have made a living doing research - their material is the same material they get from other 'experts' and academics. Most of these people, by the way, don't have any idea what it's like to be poor. They use the same material some other 'expert' did research on twenty five years ago!

These are very intelligent people. You can't blame people for doing something seemingly good. Of course not. But why is there no sustained, combined effort, no real large scale protest? That's one reason nothing concrete is done - it's because leeches are making a good living doing research, writing, talking, bullshitting, and generally sitting on their asses, looking impressive, looking cool, making lots of money. But there is a more sinister reason than this even. A reason many seasoned social activists haven't even thought about, much.

If the homeless were able get up off the ground, to the get some comfort, and in some way become 'slightly' equal, they would be able to 'inter-mingle' with the 'good' people, the voting public. They would then be able to even go into businesses, be able to get 'too close' to the 'good' people - the voting public; they would get too close... It would make the 'good' people, the voting public, even more uncomfortable than they are now. It's about comfort. It's a comfort issue. Yes, we are just that petty, we are that small.

Can you imagine poor people not suffering so much they are laying around, exhausted, tired, and in the gutter, barely able to raise their eyes to the sky? The public - the 'good' people - would have to tolerate them walking around and enjoying life! And that would be simply Intolerable! That's why they will always come up short of really helping the homeless on the streets of our great democracy. That's just how petty we really are in Canada. That's how cold and sneaky. That's why there's an industry of opportunists who know nothing substantial will ever be done - and why the bureaucrats always fall short.

38th annual Outdoor Way of the Cross

About 350 people braved the minus 13 degree temperature for the two hour walk through the inner city for the annual Outdoor Way of the Cross on Good Friday, March 30. The walk calls people of faith to live their commitments

The theme for this year was "Speaking truth to power"

"The walk invites participants to

think about the relevance and importance of the Gospel message in our world today in relation to the theme," says Jim Gurnett, a member of the organizing committee.

The walk began at 10:00 a.m. at Immigration Hall (100 Street and 105 Avenue) and finished at noon at Hope Mission, a block away. This year's walk included an area not walked before, the site of the future new Royal Alberta Museum.

2018 is the 38th anniversary of the Outdoor Way of the Cross event in Edmonton. This year's theme explored issues in the context of Jesus' words in John 8: "You shall know the

truth and the truth shall make you free" and John 14: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Reflections were offered at Homeless Memorial Plaza, Bissell Centre, and Operation Friendship, among other local places.

The walk was slowly paced over two hours and was appropriate for most people regardless of their age or mobility. Light refreshments were provided at the end of the walk, thanks to the hospitality of Hope Mission. Participants were invited to bring a non-perishable food item.

Evacuate! Or Not

By Sharon Austin

All day people had been talking about the record rainfall that had caused the level of the Musquash River to rise and torrents of water were thundering over the top of the dam and through the creek below. Usually the water flowing through the spillway was a soft comforting sound but now it had turned to a mighty roar.

At nine o'clock at night my daughter, who lives nearby, called saying excitedly: "Mom theres a man here from Emergency Measures and he's saying we have to evacuate to the city right away. We can even take the dog."

At first I thought she was joking until I saw the blue and red flashing lights glinting through the trees. Right away my husband, Don, said "I'm not going. I'm too old to stand in the line up for hours and someone has to stay and look after the animals."

He had suffered a disabling back injury many years ago and he knew it would be hard for him. We had been evacuated twice before, once when the children were still home and we took our dogs and cats to the grandparent's house in town, and once for a mock evacuation that we took part in for the nuclear power plant. We knew that once we left we would not be allowed back in until the threat of flooding was over. We have two dogs, six cats, and a flock of geese on our acreage and nowhere to go but to a hotel as the grandparents had passed away.

Quickly we turned off all the lights locked the doors and waited quietly in the dark. It felt like we were in a movie as I heard a vehicle drive in the yard, then red and blue lights flashed against the walls in the darkness. Heavy footsteps clomped up the stairs and there was a loud knock on the door, then the yellow beam of a flashlight pierced the darkness from

the window. Finally the EMO officer left, probably thinking we had gone with our daughter.

"I'm not worried about the dam," my husband said, "It was built in 1920 and they knew how to build things strong back then. If it was built in the last 10 years I'd be worried."

It was true that huge towering cement dam had stood like a fortress holding back the Musquash River for almost a hundred years. Like us it had grown more weathered and the surface cracked with age but it had stood strong through all the storms and all the changes.

Forty-eight years ago we had been the young couple that lived in the little blue camp in the valley below the dam; now we are the old folks in the white house. The dam had always been such a part of our lives, like an old friend, and so many happy memories revolved around it. It was there that we all went swimming and fishing and boating and where I walked my dogs. Like the dam, we had seen so many changes over the years from a large subdivision being built not a mile away to a natural gas pipeline that cut through the valley. The power station had been closed down in favour of nuclear power, and the giant eight foot in diameter penstock that snaked through the valley carrying water had been dismantled and hauled away. Now, as I listened to the roar of the water, I wondered if we had made the right decision.

My daughter called and she had nothing but praise for how the EMO and Red Cross had handled the evacuation. First Shyanne and her husband, Danny, were sent to a community center to be processed and receive their vouchers. There they saw a lot of people come in with dogs of all sizes and cats in carriers. Coffee, water and doughnuts were available and everything went smoothly. They were given a voucher for an overnight stay in a nearby hotel and the twenty-five dollar fee for their dog was also paid. The hotel restaurant would provide their



three meals for the next day to a value of seventy dollars for both of them. They would be alerted by cell phone when it would be safe to return home.

The EMO told them that if the dam breached to the right the subdivision would be flooded and if it breached to the left our road and the bridge would be washed out. She told us that the evacuation was only mandatory for families with children under 18, and those with serious health conditions as first responders would be unable to get to them. One neighbour, who is seriously ill, was taken by ambulance to the centre and the hotel. There were only a few other old folks like us who had chosen to stay.

At about seven o'clock the next night the rain had stopped and everyone was given the all-clear to return home. A police cruiser had guarded the Musquash road and no one had been allowed in so people didn't have to worry about looters. It had been an adventure but Shyanne and Danny were very glad to be back in their own home.

I am sure that barring an earthquake, that old dam will still be standing a hundred years from now. We will all be long gone, but it will stand guarding the valley and the salt marsh below and future generations of children will swim and fish and play in the shadow of the dam.

Third series of jackets awarded to ASN writers and vendors

By John Zapantis

There are no exceptions for unruly remarks hurled at our hard working ASN vendors when their told to "Get a job!" by some arrogant and ignorant passerby who occasionally walks by our vendors on the street corners of Calgary and Edmonton.

I should know abuse; it's out there and exists. When I once was formally an Our Voice vendor, who became quite popular while writing a series of columns for that paper notably John's Style File, The People's Columnist, Vendor Profile, Vendor of the Month and My Big Fat Greek Appetite food review, I suddenly became a feeding frenzy for a lot more of that abuse, probably because of my popularity and success as a writer for that paper.

That paper had a life span of 17 years and ran from April of 1993 up until it's last issue in January of 2010. I'd quite often experience that common remark from Edmonton's public while looking for various ways of going into defence mode. While fighting off these emotional vampires I used my version of 'Garlic' on them by trying to influence them into looking into the paper and offering them a free copy of Our Voice the Spare Change Magazine.

I realized some time along the way that a lot of unruly types either wanted to be a part of the process and some had issues of their own. I either got them involved in the process of joining our paper, or turning them into avid readers, or just simply tried to be a friend on the corner while selling the rag. I found out that by telling them a little about the paper's purpose and suggesting that they either try vending or writing about their personal issues, their unruly attitudes were starting to change for the better.

One evident example of that was when I met Keith MacDonald, who

once begged on those many downtown streets of Edmonton. Every now and then Keith would roll by my corner and kind of give me an aggressive grin and a little attitude to go with the package. That soon would all change in his favour, when one day I decided to give him an introduction to the paper's purpose and how it could benefit him as a writer or a vendor. Well, within a month he certainly surprised me, when one morning I saw what looked like Keith MacDonald selling Our Voice on the Northeast corner of 101 street and Jasper Avenue. I approached him and congratulated this former beggar in his decision to join the ranks of many vendors at Our Voice Magazine.

A few years later I had interviewed Keith on a job well done in my vendor column Vendor of the Month, elaborating on his journey and rise above adversity while selling Our Voice that had his story published in my column in 2002.

At one point I felt like I was saving souls, but stopped trying as hard when passers by would wave me away, while I tried to get their attention, offering to hand them the odd free sample copy just to borrow their time to tell them a little about the paper's benefits in the Edmonton community.

I've done my part over the year's in eradicating the stigma of how vendors are seen by a sometimes not so friendly public and I must admit there are tons of vendors who are a lot more modest or humble, who just simply want to sell the Alberta Street News so that they can supplement their marginalized incomes from AISH or Welfare Supports.

When I was selling the paper for the seven years that I vended from December 9th, 1996 to December 31 2003, I was working a full time job at a pizzeria on the south side as a food

prep cook and flyer distributor in the evenings. I was a different sort of vendor, who while writing for Our Voice, also wrote for various other community rags and soon was on my way to becoming a local TV celebrity with the added television and radio exposure that I achieved while competing in the Songs of the Street poetry nights hosted and created by Former Our Voice Editor Michael Walters, who we all know now as Edmonton City Councillor Michael Walters. That poetry forum empowered the poets involved in that poetry competition to express their personal stories, while rising above life's many adversaries interpreted into poetry.

Now I'm the Media Relations Coordinator with the Alberta Street News and was notable for getting my fresh start in that position, when I came up with the creative idea of writing letters to various major media outlets informing them about our name change launch on January 3rd of 2012.

My creative side would soon pay off. After sending 16 e-mails out to various television and news print media, nine media outlets responded and covered our launch, interviewing our ASN Founder and Editor Linda Dumont. She could be seen on various Edmonton and Calgary television networks giving her introduction on the paper's purpose and how our paper expanded it's reach into Calgary, which now made us known as Alberta's only provincial street newspaper.

The following week I came over to Linda's place to have her download

I emailed to her the week before, and she opened the back door of her house to let me in, inviting me in for a surprise announcement. As she looked me in the eye and pointed right out at me with a smile on her face and she said

firmly, "From now you're in charge of PR."

Since my appointment, a loyal reader could spread the word alone to the mass public at large about how this former vendor went on to eradicate stigma that not all vendors are incompetent and lazy and should get a real job! I must say I've had a field day on writing an array of interesting stories on people and short story encounters that would have the readers shaking their heads with what evolved around my prolific written stories.

I've achieved so much with the Our Voice, and other papers and the Alberta Street News that there would be so much to chronicle in this story that would not fit into the amount of words required, but enough said. With what Alberta Street News has done for my credibility as a writer and Media Relations Coordinator, I felt the inner desire to want to give something special back to our writers and vendors over at Alberta Street News.

I came up with a game plan back in the summer of 2016 and created an Alberta Street News logo that I designed and had crested and had embroidered onto Alberta Street News work caps that were funded by me and presented to ASN writers and vendors during our Alberta Street News 13th anniversary celebration that was



Alberta Street News Media Relations Coordinator John Zapantis proudly holding up ASN jackets he's purchased for ASN Writer Maria B. and ASN Writer Rob Champion. He'd like to remind them that he's still holding their jackets for them! Photo by Linda

hosted at St. Faith's Church in Edmonton on November 16th in 2016. 30 caps with the Alberta Street News logo on them were presented and handed out by me to various ASN writers and vendors, acknowledging their written contributions and their commitments for a job well done.

Right into the following year, I had 24 jackets with the logos and names of ASN staff and their distinctive occupational titles crested and embroidered by Elite Promotional Marketing, formerly Elite Sports Wear and Awards, all funded by me and finally handed out personally to those deserving souls who've made the Alberta Street News the distinctive entity that it has become in the Alberta communities.

So to salute 12 more loyal ASN writ-

ers and vendors for a job well done, the following 12 ASN staff will be receiving their ASN jackets by the end of March 2018, when they are completed, by Elite Promotional Marketing: Shaun Giroux, Danielle Zyp, Lisa Anderson, Michelle Black, Theresa Walsh Cooke, Andie W.L., Belle St. Michel, Jim Gurnett, Pedro Shultz, Gilly Ro, Norma Harms and Donald Friske.

I like to thank Elite Promotional Marketing staff: Owner Drew Schermerhorn and Kira Bellerose, for a job well done on the embroidery and cresting of our 12 ASN jackets. Those interested in picking up their jackets can make arrangements to phone me by leaving a message at 780-250-7126 or you can email me at johnzap2@yahoo.ca.

Why the Homeless Are Always Persecuted

By Rodney Graham
 Founding Editor. Street Sheet
 (Canada)

Someone asked the age old question today - "Why do the cops persecute the homeless so much!?" Over a period of an entire lifetime, I've been a homeless child in the past myself, so I have pondered it that long, believe it or not. I think I have a reasonably accurate answer to the question.

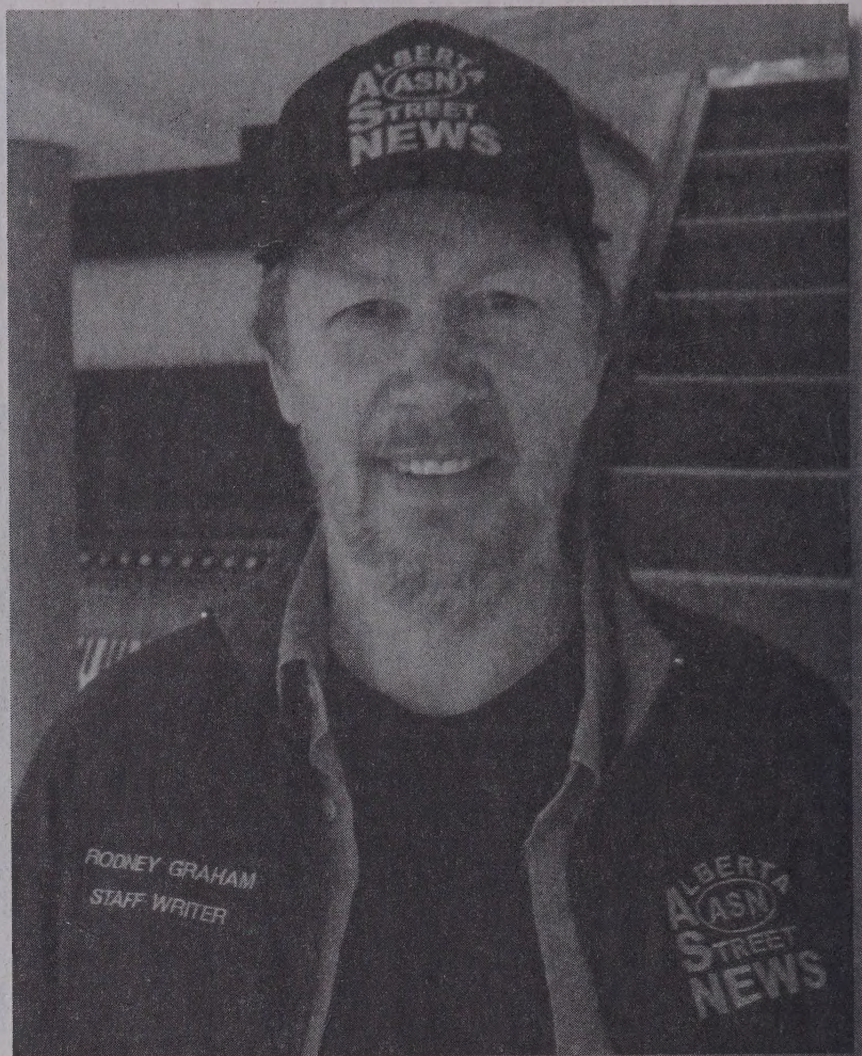
It may sound over simplistic, but it is the right answer. Everyone blames the police - they are merely responding to those who have the biggest voice out there the ones who butter their bread, too. There's a simple answer to your question - I will give it to you now: The police serve the status quo - that is mostly going to be the local business community in their district, the chamber of commerce. The number one complaint they have to give the police is homeless people - they regard them as bad for business even if they are a block or two away!- They don't tolerate any form of 'eyesore' so they call police continually on them, on the sly of course. They demand a 'clean and sterile, presentable venue'. But it isn't just the status quo, and the business community behind the injustice and

oppression. It goes beyond that and includes many more. Many more.

The business community - calling the police and security to harass the poor - no one sees their activity, they do it on the sly. They also lobby city hall continually to 'crack down on panhandlers'. It's been going on for decades - that's what is behind the war on the poor in Canada - the business community. It is the reason there are so many incredibly unjust by-laws all over Canada and the US. So why are these laws not protested and repealed? To some extent activists have tried.

They are up against big money. That's what controls law and justice in the end. Another, even more sinister problem exists and has probably been the grease that really lubricates this Potemkin Village we live in. The general public consider the issue of injustice against the homeless and less fortunate as unimportant, not even an issue for the 'voting' public to consider. They are giving the oppressors, the greedy, the bullies complete approval in their silence and their apathy.

There you have it. It's not pretty, but it's reality, it's the truth.



The five Freedoms for Animals

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst.
2. Freedom from pain, injury and disease.
3. Freedom from distress.
4. Freedom from discomfort.
5. Freedom to express behaviours that promote well being.

North American SPCA

The Secret Hours

By Angelique Branston

One late August afternoon about a week before school started my sister and I shared an experience with which we now look back on and laugh.

My sister had been visiting for awhile. Often times that summer we found we were alone with our dad. He took turns locking me and my sister in the basement for imagined wrongs we had done, as a way of punishment. He was very strict with what we were allowed to eat. Even after days of having nothing we went right back to the strict diet. Deviation from his rules meant certain brutal punishment.

We found little ways to make our stomachs hurt less like picking certain vegetation that grows in Alberta (our mom studied plants and taught us what to eat if we ever got lost in the woods), as well as licking the mineral blocks with the goats after feeding and watering all the goats and chickens on the farm. Well one afternoon just before school started our dad drove us into Fort Saskatchewan to go swimming and he gave me money for school supplies - pens and pencils, paper and binders. We were told to swim for at least three hours and he would pick us up by the mall. He watched us walk into the swimming pool and drove off. After an hour of swimming my little sister crawled out of the pool and sagged down, resting her head on the floor. When I asked her if she was alright she said yes. She was just hungry. We both looked

out through the glass to see the big M sign shining less than a half a block away. When I looked back at my sister I could see she, too, was weighing the cost and the likelihood of being caught.

We talked quickly about how there was no one we knew near by so no one could tell him what we did. One of his ways of control was to lie and tell you that your friend saw what you were doing and was concerned over your actions so of course they told him... your dad....just to trick you into confessing. As long as we made it back to where we were supposed to meet up he would never know the difference.

So with red eyes from the chlorine, my little sister and I walked to the McDonalds. She couldn't stop talking about how good the burgers would taste even as we stepped up to the counter. I pulled out my money. It was a fifty dollar bill. We both ordered a few hamburgers and a pop and sat down. We hunched over our food and ate fast. For our second trip to the counter the teenagers were smirking and giggling. I am sure with our red eyes and binge eating we must have looked stoned.

After drinking about four large pops were told we had to buy another burger. We nodded our heads and I handed over the money. They had to send someone to clean our table for us at one point. The table was covered with little crunched up wrappers.

After our first hour at McDonalds, our bodies finally stopped shaking. The teenagers no longer smirked at us but simply looked with eyes full of curiosity and



concern. We left full for the first time in what felt like forever. Giggling and skipping we made our way back to the appointed spot to meet.

We agreed that to not give ourselves away we would eat our supper when we got home, which was not hard to do. We were fed thin vegetable soup and told to go to our rooms. We met up in my sister's room and lay on the bed together. We had made it. We were not caught. Life would continue as normal with our home life. But that day we learned that our dad did not always have someone watching us. There were limits to his control. For those few hours we were free.

I spent the rest of the year borrowing paper and pens from kids in my class. Having moved around so much by this time I had no friends in school. It was easier not to try. I never once regretted my decision to spend the money on what has now become part of our collection of memories that I think of as our secret hours.



CALGARY MOUNTAIN VIEW CONSTITUENCY

"I want to encourage Alberta Street News and the important work they do in raising awareness of life on the street. The well-being of our street people is connected to the well-being of our city. We need to do a better job of ensuring that street people are healthy and safe."



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